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May 6, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (LA-03) announced today that the one-time \$250 economic recovery payments for Social Security recipients will begin to go out on May 7. The payments, which were provided for in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, should all be distributed by the end of May. Rep. Melancon was the only Louisiana member of the House of Representatives to vote in support of the bill.

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**"Recent hurricanes and the downturn in the economy have hit many senior citizens in south Louisiana especially hard," said Rep. Melancon. "With these recovery payments, 650,499 older Louisianians on Social Security will be receiving a little extra income this month to help them make ends meet. And the payments' ripple effect will benefit all Louisianians, boosting our economy through increased consumer spending."**

The Social Security Administration will deliver the \$250 payment by check to those recipients who receive their Social Security benefit by check and by direct deposit for those recipients who receive their Social Security benefit by direct deposit.

In addition to seniors on Social Security, by mid-May adults and children with disabilities who are recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits will also begin to receive one-time \$250 recovery payments. In Louisiana's Third Congressional District, a total of \$28.5 million will be distributed to recipients of Social Security and SSI. \$200.32 million will be distributed statewide.

Millions of the Social Security recipients receiving these payments are widowed, divorced, or single and among the seniors with the lowest average incomes. Social Security is the only source of income for nearly one-third of all nonmarried seniors receiving Social Security. The median annual income for nonmarried Social Security recipients over age 65 who are women is only \$13,151. The median annual income of nonmarried Social Security recipients over age 65 who are men is only \$17,611. Nearly 30 percent of nonmarried Social Security recipients who are women over age 65 are poor or near-poor - with 17.4 percent living below the federal poverty line and another 10.8 percent with incomes below 125 percent of the poverty line.

In addition to the economic recovery payments being made to Social Security and SSI recipients, the Recovery Act also provides these payments to disabled veterans and Railroad Retirement recipients. The payments to Railroad Retirement recipients are scheduled to begin to go out in late May and the payments to disabled veterans in June. In total, more than 50

million Americans will get this one-time payment.

If someone regularly receives benefits from two or more of these programs - such as Social Security and Railroad Retirement, or a disabled veterans' benefit and SSI - he or she will receive just one \$250 payment.

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